

Gray, Valerie A. (DNREC)

From: rlrdel@aol.com
Sent: Friday, July 06, 2018 2:22 PM
To: Gray, Valerie A. (DNREC)
Subject: Delaware's Clean Air Act petitions: feedback for communication to the EPA

This Email is in response to the request to voice concerns to the EPA about DE's and MD's Clean Air Act petitions, per the article in the June 27, 2018 News Journal, page 3A.

I am a long-time resident of northern DE. I vehemently oppose the Trump administration's/EPA's plan to deny DE's and MD's petitions to safeguard air quality and, thereby, the health of their respective residents. The American Lung Association gave New Castle County, DE a failing grade for ozone pollution for the 19th year in a row. A significant amount of that pollution comes from emissions from power plants in upwind states named in the news article. Data on production of unhealthy ozone levels by upwind states is supported by computer modeling and was shared with the EPA, yet the EPA denied DE's petition. It is an indisputable fact that exposure to ozone suppresses the immune system and creates respiratory problems including wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. Air pollution also contributes to cancer of the respiratory system. Several families in my area have had to keep family members indoors with increasing frequency over the years because they can't catch their breath when they're outside, especially in summer. This situation will become much more prevalent and severe if corrective actions are not taken. Those actions are long overdue.

Despite pleas for the EPA to hold a hearing in DE rather than in DC, the EPA instead held a hearing in Washington to deny the Clean Air Act petitions. EPA's denial of DE's and MD's petitions is morally reprehensible and operationally equivalent to deliberately creating an environment that will sicken many and likely kill others. Coupled with the Trump administration's considering the repeal of the Clean Power Plan and the administration's plans to gut healthcare programs including CHIP and the ACA, ignoring scientifically proven data on air pollution is tantamount to systematically killing millions of people. To dismantle environmental protections is despicable; to deny the rights of at-risk states to even be heard by the EPA is an outrage.

We cannot and should not allow our rights to be denied and our health further jeopardized. Notwithstanding the current administration's efforts to the contrary, the EPA's mission is to protect our environment and our health. That is what the Agency should be held accountable for doing. Fact: denying the petitions and dismantling the US's first and only federal plan to limit carbon pollution from power plants places us at increased health risk from pollution. It is unconscionable. I applaud DNREC's initiatives and its commitment to caring for its citizens. You are a sorely-needed voice of reason. You have data, and you have my support.

Respectfully,
R. Ruben, Ph.D.
rlrdel@aol.com